

Message Text

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63

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-04

RSC-01 USIA-15 PRS-01 SP-03 EB-11 FEA-02 ACDA-19

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1726

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ENRG, TECH, UK

SUBJECT: FURTHER PRESS COMMENT ON REACTOR CHOICE

1. THE TIMES OF JULY 1 CARRIED A FRONT-PAGE ARTICLE HEADLINED "GOVERNMENT PUTS SAFETY FIRST IN CHOOSING BRITISH NUCLEAR REACTOR INSTEAD OF AMERICAN MODEL". THE ARTICLE THEN STATES THIS THEME AS WHAT IS EXPECTED TO BE ANNOUNCED IN ABOUT TWO WEEKS, NOT AS A DECISION THAT HAS ACTUALLY BEEN TAKEN. NO RPT NO SPECIFIC SOURCES ARE CITED FOR THE TIMES' STORY. ANOTHER ARTICLE IN THE SAME ISSUE, CARRIED IN THE BUSINESS NEWS SECTION AND ENTITLED "AEC CONCERNED AT LIGHT WATER REACTOR FAILURES", ATTRIBUTES EXPRESSIONS OF CONCERN ABOUT LWR COMMERCIAL PERFORMANCE TO THE AEC ACCIDENT ANALYSIS BOARD CHIEF. THE ARTICLE NOTES THAT MANY STOPPAGES OF LWR OPERATIONS HAVE BEEN CAUSED BY COMPONENT FAILURES.

2. COMMENT: THE TIMES CONSISTENTLY HAS TAKEN A NEGATIVE POSITION ON THE PURCHASE OF US-DESIGN LWR'S TO THE DETRIMENT OF BRITISH DESIGNS. THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY NUCLEAR DIVISION CHIEF TOLD US THAT THE ABOVE TIMES
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STORIES HAVE NO RPT NO BASIS IN ANNOUNCED HMG POLICY.

HE OPINED THAT THIS IS SIMPLY ANOTHER SPECULATIVE
JOURNALISTIC EFFORT AND COMMENTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT
WELL UNDERSTANDS US CONCERNS THAT SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS
NOT BE CITED AS THE PRINCIPAL REASON FOR REJECTING LWR'S
IF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT DECIDES TO ADOPT AN ALTERNATE
SYSTEM.
ANNENBERG

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